

Speaker Registration/Testimony

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Meeting Date 10-11-2017
Council/PH Committee ExecutiveMatters
Agenda Item Sit-Lie Bans Bills 83, 87, and 88
Your position on the matter Oppose
Representing Self
Organization
Do you wish to speak at the No hearing?

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Written Testimony

I'm a long-time Moiliili resident, submitting this written testimony. I oppose Bill 83, Bill 87, and Bill 88 because I question what are their desired outcomes. I'm afraid they raise a series of questions on the logic of it all. Do they accomplish what we need: people having homes and health care? Is the purpose to help homeless people or to move people out of sight from other people? Will they do anything to reduce the number of individuals who are homeless or create any housing or mental health services for those who need them? Do you actually believe that "sweeping" more of the island will result in more homeless shelters and rental housing? What proof do you have that sit-lie bans have worked to get people in housing in Honolulu? We know that forcing people from one location only moves them to another. That's what's happened before and that's what will continue by expanding the sit-lie ban. Additionally, a study by UH student researchers in 2015 found that sweeps from sidewalks were ineffective and cruel. Costs for sweeps and enforcement should instead be spent on shelters, permanent rental housing, and mental health care.

I walk this city and pass by dozens of people living on the street, especially early morning and evenings as I go to and from work and errands. Yes, I hate seeing people living on the street and I hate knowing that many of them need medical help, food, restrooms they can use, and places to safely keep their valuable belonging such as identification. I regularly view law enforcement actions and emergency responses for people living on the street and it saddens me that so much of our resources now go to these efforts.

We all agree that homelessness and the lack of affordable housing is complicated and seriously impacting our lives. In my opinion, the great failure of our city and state started decades ago with not building rental properties and creating more subsidies for lower income families and individuals and not developing enough mental health services and substance abuse treatment services. With every year, the saga deepens and intensifies as luxury condos are built on properties that could include rentals. Among the

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10/10/2017

recent mistakes and missed opportunities are the City's approval of a 15-story supposed private, luxury student dorm at University Ave. and S. King St. which now appears to be market-priced rentals for anyone who swears they won't own a car and the \$2.4 million lapsed federal (HOME) funds with the possibility of losing \$7.5 million more. It's time we be accountable for actions that prevent us from creating housing that people need.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my testimony.

Testimony
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